Ερατώ Ιωάννου

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To:	'info@frederick.ac.cy'; 'sec.cc@frederick.ac.cy'
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Subject:	External Evaluation Reports - Maritime Law and Shipping Business
Attachments:	FRED_UNI_MARITIME_LAW_MASTER.pdf; FRED_UNI_MARITIME_LAW_MASTER_DL.pdf

Προς:

Πρύτανη Πανεπιστημίου Frederick,
Πρόεδρο Συμβουλίου Πανεπιστημίου Frederick,

Έχω οδηγίες, με βάση το Άρθρο 20(1)(2)(ε)(iii) των περί της Διασφάλισης και Πιστοποίησης της Ποιότητας της Ανώτερης Εκπαίδευσης και της Ίδρυσης και Λειτουργίας Φορέα για Συναφή Θέματα Νόμων του 2015 και 2016, να σας διαβιβάσω την έκθεση εξωτερικής αξιολόγησης για το πρόγραμμα σπουδών «Maritime Law and Shipping Business (MSc)» και «Maritime Law and Shipping Business (MSc – Distance Learning)».

Παρακαλώ όπως εκφράσετε γραπτώς τις παρατηρήσεις σας επ' αυτής το αργότερο σε 3 (τρεις) μήνες.

(Ερατώ Ιωάννου-Μουστάκα)
για Πρόεδρο Συμβουλίου Φορέα Διασφάλισης
και Πιστοποίησης της Ποιότητας
της Ανώτερης Εκπαίδευσης

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Doc. Number: 300.1.1

Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

Republic of Cyprus

External Evaluation Report

Program of Study

Institution Frederick University

Program of Study: MA/LLM in Maritime Law and Shipping Business – Distance Learning

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DI.P.A.E.   AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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INSTRUCTIONS:

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the "Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2016" [N. 136 (I)/2015].

The document is duly completed by the External Evaluation Committee for each program of study. The ANNEX (Doc. Number 300.1) constitutes an integral part of the external evaluation report for the external evaluation accreditation of a new program of study.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

NAME	TITLE	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Loukas Mistelis	Professor	Queen Mary University of London, Centre for Commercial Law Studies
Jason Chuah	Professor and Head of Department	City University London, Law School
Evangelos Sambracos	Professor of Transport Economics	University of Piraeus, Department of Economics
Antonios Lionarakis	Professor	Hellenic Open University
Charalambos Constantinou	Lawyer	Limassol, Cyprus Bar Association
Sotiris Christofi	Student	University of Cyprus

INTRODUCTION:

I. The External Evaluation procedure

- Short description of the documents that have been studied, of the on site visit meetings, and of the on site visit to the infrastructures.

We have received and reviewed:

- Programme's General Profile
- Programme's Content
- Application information
- Structure of the Programme of Study
- List of Courses of the Programme of Study
- Teaching Personnel, Courses and Teaching Periods in the Programme of Study
- Teaching Personnel, Qualifications and Total Number of Teaching Periods
- List of Compulsory Courses and Elective Courses
- Course Descriptions
- Detailed Biographical Notes
- Infrastruture data
- Quality Standards and Indicators
- Sample of Certificate

We have performed following on site visit and meetings:

- on 12 September 2016, visit to the Nicosia campus of Frederick University and meeting with programme coordinating academics, administrative staff and students as well as university administrators (7.5 hours)
- on 13 September 2016, visit to the Limassol campus of Frederick University and meeting with academics and students as well as site visits to the infrastructure, including library, computer labs and classrooms (6 hours including travel time).

II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

- Comments concerning the quality and the completeness of the application submitted by the institution of higher education (Doc. Number 200.1), as well as concerning the overall acceptance of and participation in the quality assurance procedures, by the institution in general and by the program of study under evaluation in particular.

While the Doc Number 200.1 submitted has some shortcomings, such as discrepancy on the programme title on the cover page and on the programme general profile, it is overall a comprehensive and instructive submission which provides evidence of significant amount of planning work, at academic and internal review process.

It appears that the internal review process was comprehensive and thorough and has resulted in a full and comprehensive internal review. It would have been useful to also have some diagrams or flowcharts to visualise the processes and progression from semester one to semester two and then semester three. This is a mere matter of presentation and not substance.

We find that the application concerns a well conceived and designed programme which is both innovative and academically rigorous. Consequently we are of the view that the programme is acceptable and the application meets all the requisite European and international standard of quality assurance procedures. While Frederick University is fairly young institution and one of the departments coordinating this proposed programme is even younger we find that not only they are aware of the quality assurance procedures and standards expected but as a matter of fact (and policy) they endorse them and apply them.

The programme of study under evaluation also meets all the requisite standards and procedures of quality assurance and is consistent with our expectations and the expectations set by the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education of the Republic of Cyprus.

FINDINGS:

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- **Organization of Teaching Work**
- **Teaching**
- **Teaching personnel**

The teaching work is efficiently and systematically organised and would allow the programme of study to deliver the learning objectives as described by the applicant institution. This is a inter-disciplinary programme arranged by two departments (law and maritime studies) within the same School. This makes the programme innovative and unique as it combines business law with shipping business. It builds on a very successful maritime studies programme by collaborating with the faily new law department.

The teaching is well organised between the two departments and comprises a nearly equal number of maritime law and shipping business modules with options of electives offered to students in the second semester.

The programme is rather lean in resources and can certainly benefit from a few more electives (perhaps in public / regulatory law and human resources management).

The teaching personnel is well specialised in the key subject areas and qualified academically to deliver the modules and the programme. The full time members of staff will be assisted by number of visiting academics who bring both practical and academic experience.

There is also support provided by the Distance Learning Unit of the university which provides learning and technical support to all students and academics. Both students and academic have to undertake training from this unit.

Flexible delivery particularly useful for DL students.

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

- Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study
- Structure and Content of the Program of studies
- Quality Assurance of the Program of studies
- Management of the Program of Study
- International Dimension of the Program of Study
- Connection with the labor market and the society

The purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the programme of study are well defined and described in the submitted documentation and are appropriate for a masters programme of study.

The programme is structured in three semesters, the first one focusing on teaching core specialist subjects, the second a mixture of core subjects and electives and the third semester is focusing on the dissertation. The content comprises of maritime law and shipping business modules with mandatory and elective modules. There is a good balance of modules but one would welcome the introduction of further electives in due course.

The internal quality assurance of the programme meets the relevant European and international standards and on occasions surpasses them. There are solid feedback and evaluation process built in.

The programme is managed jointly by the two relevant departments and two duly qualified programme coordinators.

There is a clear international dimension of the programme of study in terms of design and outlook and indeed subject matter and personnel involved from various academic institutions abroad. The internationality is a bit more challenging in respect of student mobility as the programme is a shorter one and hence the students may not be able to arrange a study abroad. It is however well suited for incoming foreign students.

Finally it is evident from the documentation ans the on site visits and meetings held that the programme is well connected with the relevant industries and labour market and could offer the students excellent employment opportunities. At the same time it has very positive impact on the society as it enhances ability of student to work in the so-called blue (maritime) economy and would provide well qualified and trained graduates for immediate employment in this expanding labour market.

Distance learning considerations were taken into account fully in designing the courses and programme.

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING

- **Research Teaching Synergies**

The key academic staff involved in the teaching of the programme also have a research profile in the same subject area. It appears that they have undertaken significant funded research in the broader area of shipping law and shipping business. Funding appears to have come from public and private sources.

Consequently there is evidence of synergy of teaching and research, although at first glance the taught subjects appear to be more traditional. We would recommend an enhancement of this synergy by gradually introducing, as the programme grows, more elective module to cover public law aspects such as environmental protection, maritime law and shipping business and their interaction with energy and natural resources.

One would also normally expect that as the programme gets underway students will assist in the delivery of research projects and will interact more actively with research initiatives, hence fully realising such synergy.

Clearly it is far more challenging to engage distance learning students in research but hopefully there will be some benefit to these students too.

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

- **Administrative Mechanisms**
- **Infrastructures / Support**
- **Financial Resources**

We were impressed by the administrative mechanisms in place for student welfare and support of teaching work. The Studies and Student Welfare Service seems very well equipped and staffed to support students and studies from the very start (pre-enrollment) to completion of studies. Two particular excellent features were that of the student advocate / ombudsman and the sysrem of probation and support for student with an average of 6 or below so that they can improve. There are also advice and counselling services as well as career services. And also a pre-enrollment orientation / induction website.

There are detailed mechanisms for the support of students and study programmes and these were presented to us.

The infrastructure is good and in some respects very good. The buidlings are modern and well maintained. There are very good teaching rooms well equipped with AV systems, and also with natural light. The computed labs are very well resourced and there are on site full-time support staff.

One area of improvement is the library and most specifically online resources. At this stage it focuses on support of taught courses but gradually it will have to expand to also support wider research on the programme of study. We understand that in addition to the current holdings many new books have been ordered. We would also recommend subscription to Wetlaw or Lexis and also provide more information on free access sources, SSRN/LSN, bailli, etc. It would be very useful to acquire a number of e-books.

The financial resources appear to be very healthy and we understand that there are discussion to recruit a few more full time members of staff.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

The distance learning unit of the university has played a significant role in assisting with the design and the delivery of the programme. The team we have met appears to be very qualified for this purpose. In addition to assisting with the design they also have a role in inductions, teacher training as well as student training and support. The Unit should have some pedagogical background and the platform as an important instrument for delivering the learning material should be designed and focused more on the learning procedure.

We have seen some examples of DL courses from other programmes and the software used as well as other supporting platform but no mock ups for this programme.

There seems to be a good practice in relation to student feedback, engaging students to participate and mentoring as well supervision of discussions by teaching staff.

It would be useful to have the technical specifications clearly stipulated for the benefit of the students and also to have detailed explanations or video presentations about the use of forums.

It would also be useful to have a policy for staff-student ratio.

The interaction of the distance programme should be more concentrated on the learner role by involving him / her into the programme. Using the platform just as an instrument without pedagogical standards doesn't help the learners to participate and be involved in the learning experience. Appropriate regular tasks ensures such involvement.

6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY

N/A

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE[1]

- The present situation of the program, good practices, weaknesses that have been detected during the external evaluation procedure by the external evaluation committee, suggestions for improvement.

1. Effectiveness of teaching

Good practice

a. Cross disciplinary approach
b. Subscription to turnitin
c. A sound student ombudsman system

Recommendations

a. Making clear the content of the pre-sessional course for potential applicants
b. English proficiency criteria not very clear (for example IELTS 6.5 no stated; whether an interview will be required)
c. No information in the programme specification about the pre-sessional shipping seminars
d. Introduce an introduction to legal method, legal institutions/systems and legal skills course as a preparatory course.
e. Continued provision of academic skills and competencies (eg. Writing skills, referencing skills etc.) programme.
f. Information about what students can expect from dissertation supervisions.
g. Amend the different word limits for the Dissertation in the conventional course (15,000) as against the distance learning programme (20,000)

2. Programme of study and HE qualifications

Good practice

a. A good range of assessment methods
b. Admissions criteria which encourage wide participation
c. Good application of the ECTS
d. Flexible options for the busy professional (especially the Distance Learning Course)

Recommendations

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[1] It is highlighted, at this point, that the External Evaluation Committee is expected to justify its findings and its suggestions on the basis of the Document num.: 300.1. The External Evaluation Committee is not expected to submit a suggestion for the approval or the rejection of the program of study under evaluation. This decision falls under the competencies of the Council of the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of higher education.

ΔΙ.Π.Α.Ε. ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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a. Supervision training for visiting lecturers (given that some VLs are not active academic researchers but eminent professionals) for both the programmes.
b. No sample teaching materials available for scrutiny
c. No actual mock up of the web learning platform for scrutiny
d. Student exchange (especially Erasmus) programme not convenient given the programme structure; students on DL course need to be properly informed.
e. Should demonstrate how the online delivery actually supports the achievement of the learning outcomes expressed in the individual modules. The course team refers to the immersed learning model for the DL course – clearer articulation on how interactivity is achieved is needed (not enough, perhaps, only to use the online discussion board).

3. Research and synergies with teaching

Good practice

NA

Recommendations

a. To consider using some of the research projects as a platform for learning and teaching (for instance, the project could be used as a case study for formative assessment or self-reflection)
b. The Research Methods module does not refer to legal research methodologies or indeed a bibliography with some of the more important legal research materials.
c. Although the course team stressed that the research methods module will focus on law and shipping business, the module description is not quite explicit about that emphasis.
d. To reconsider whether an examination is an appropriate means of assessing Research Methods.

4. Administration services, student welfare and support

Good practice

a. Student support website is excellent – especially for DL students
b. The Department's e-learning databases referred to a p2(68) in the DL programme.

Recommendations

a. Should consider referring students to bailii.org for free legal materials
b. A long term enhancement would be a paid subscription to lexis or westlaw.
c. Revising the module specifications to consider specifically introducing relevant e-books.

d. Devise a careers support scheme which is relevant specifically to postgraduate students (perhaps build on the excellent programme for undergraduates)

5. Distance learning

Good Practice

a. Good opportunity for student feedback.
b. Good mentoring and control of discussions by teaching staff.

Recommendations

a. Technical specifications of IT equipment should be made clear to students (including for example processing speed and data storage).
b. There is no sample of the VLE (virtual learning environment) training module for students and staff. A useful model should include an FAQ troubleshooting sheet, contact details of the IT support team, a "how to" video, and a forum board for students to post problems/concerns.
c. Clearer information in the module specifications as to how often discussions on the platform should take place.
d. Consider assessing participation in the forums to encourage engagement from students.
e. Articulate a target IT support staff- student ratio

Doc. Number: 300.1

Quality Standards and Indicators

External Evaluation of a New Program of Study

Institution: **Frederick University**

Program of Study: **MA/LLM in Maritime Law and Shipping Business – Distance Learning**

Duration of the Program of Study: **18 months full-time / 36 months part-time**

Evaluation Date: **13 September 2016**

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the "Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2016".

The document describes the quality standards and indicators, which will be applied for the external evaluation of programs of study of institutions of higher education, by the External Evaluation Committee.

DIRECTIONS: Note what is applicable for each quality standard/indicator.

1. Applicable to a minimum degree
2. Applicable to a non satisfactory degree
3. Applicable to a satisfactory degree
4. Applicable to a very satisfactory degree
5. It applies and it constitutes a good practice

It is pointed out that, in the case of standards and indicators that cannot be applied due to the status of the institution and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the institution's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality standard or indicator.

Members of the External Evaluation Committee

NAME	TITLE	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Loukas Mistelis	Professor	Queen Mary University of London, Centre for Commercial Law Studies
Jason Chuah	Professor and Head of Department	City University London, Law School
Evangelos Sambracos	Professor of Transport Economics	University of Piraeus, Department of Economics
Antonios Lionarakis	Professor	Hellenic Open University
Charalambos Constantinou	Lawyer	Limassol, Cyprus Bar Association
Sotiris Christofi	Student	University of Cyprus

Date and Time of the On-Site Visit: 12 and 13 September 2016

Duration of the On-Site Visit: 8 hours on 12/9/2016 and 6 hours on 13/9/2016

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES							
1.1	**Organization of teaching work**		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1.1.1	The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.				X		
1.1.2	The number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices.					X	
1.1.3	The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Particularly, the following are taken into consideration:					X	
	1.1.3.1	The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication.				X	
	1.1.3.2	The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel			X		
	1.1.3.3	The course web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material			X		
	1.1.3.4	The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training			X		
	1.1.3.5	The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment				X	
	1.1.3.6	The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process.				X	
1.1.4	Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following:				X		
	1.1.4.1	facilities			X		
	1.1.4.2	Library			X		
	1.1.4.3	Infrastructure				X	
	1.1.4.4	student welfare					X

	1.1.4.5	academic mentoring					X
1.1.5		A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied.				X	
1.1.6		The teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students.				X	
1.1.7		Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective.					X
1.1.8		Control mechanisms for student performance are effective.				X	
1.1.9		Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective.					X
1.1.10		Academic mentoring processes are transparent and effective for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic work load.				X	
1.1.11		The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.					X
1.1.12		The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Overall the teaching work is very well organised in terms of academic planning, teaching resources and general infrastructure

Good practice

- Cross disciplinary approach
- Subscription to turnitin
- A sound student ombudsman system
- Very good teaching rooms given the size of classes
- Good student-staff ratio

Recommendations

- No information in the programme specification about the pre-sessional shipping seminars
- Introduce an introduction to legal method, legal institutions/systems and legal skills course as a preparatory course.
- Continued provision of academic skills and competencies (eg. Writing skills, referencing skills etc.) programme.

- Information about what students can expect from dissertation supervisions.
- Library seems to only have basic titles so it would cover teaching well but needs to be enhanced with more titles and online subscriptions to support the research needs of master's level students. In any event for the DL programme it is essential to have many ebooks.

Note, additionally:

α) the expected number of Cypriot and International Students in the program of study.
β) the countries of origin of the majority of students.
γ) the maximum planned number of students per class-section.

   a) expected number of students is unclear at this stage – it is expected it will be both Cypriot and international students
   b) predominately Cyprus, Greece and other countries in the region and further afield
   c) maximum number of students for the programme is 25 and most classes will have significantly smaller sizes

1.2	Teaching	1	2	3	4	5
1.2.1	The methodology utilized in each course is suitable for achieving the course's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules.				X	
1.2.2	The methodology of each course is suitable for adults.				X	
1.2.3	Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly.				X	
1.2.4	The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance, are clear, adequate, and known to the students.				X	
1.2.5	Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process, are implemented.			X		
1.2.6	Teaching incorporates the use of modern educational technologies that are consistent with international standards, including a platform for the electronic support of learning.				X	
1.2.7	Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual courses, and are updated regularly.			X		

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

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DI.P.A.E.

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Teaching is well designed by the programme coordinators and they are well qualified to deliver the programme of study

Comments
- Teaching methodologies and planned syllabi well reflect the inter-disciplinary nature of the programme
- Methodology and syllabi well suitable for master's courses
- Assessment methods consistent with European standards
- Teaching materials provided are sound for the teaching part of the course but enhancement would be needed for the research part of the course
- We have not seen mock ups for the DL courses as they are yet to be designed but we have seen existing DL courses from other departments

1.3	Teaching Personnel	1	2	3	4	5
1.3.1	The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study.			X		
1.3.2	The members of teaching personnel for each course have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the course, as described by the legislation, including the following:				X	
	1.3.2.1 Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline.				X	
	1.3.2.2 Publications within the discipline.			X		
1.3.3	The specializations of Visiting Professors adequately support the program of study.					X
1.3.4	Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists have the necessary qualifications, adequate work experience and specialization to teach a limited number of courses in the program of study.				X	
1.3.5	In every program of study the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel.				X	
1.3.6	The teaching personnel of each private institution of tertiary education, to a percentage of at least 70%, has recognized academic qualification, by one level higher than that of the program of study in which he/she teaches.					X
1.3.7	In the program of study, the ratio of the number of courses taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of courses taught by part-time				X	

		1	2	3	4	5
	personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study.					
1.3.8	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate for the support and safeguarding of the program's quality.				X	
1.3.9	The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society.			X		
1.3.10	Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span.			X		
1.3.11	The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

The teaching personnel is well qualified in terms of educational and academic background to deliver the programme. They have studies at PhD level in the relevant subject areas and teach and research in these areas.

The law part of the programme relies on few full time academic staff who are very well qualified. It would be useful for more full time academic staff to be recruited.

Quite a large number of visiting professors, all very well qualified.

Training is provided for all DL courses teachers

	2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS					
2.1	**Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study**	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.1	The purpose and objectives of the program of study are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes and are consistent with the mission and the strategy of the institution.				X	
2.1.2	The purpose and objectives of the program and the learning outcomes are utilized as a guide for the design of the program of study.				X	
2.1.3	Thehighereducationqualificationandtheprogramofstudy,conformtothe provisions of their corresponding Professional and Vocational Bodies for the purpose of registration to these bodies.			NA		

		1	2	3	4	5
2.1.4	The program's content, the methods of assessment, the teaching materials and the equipment, lead to the achievement of the program's purpose and objectives and ensure the expected learning outcomes.			X		
2.1.5	The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students and to the members of the academic and teaching personnel.				X	
2.1.6	The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.			X		
2.1.7	The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

- The learning objectives of the programme are very well defined.
- There is no professional or vocational qualifications attached to this programme
- The learning process is well designed to achieve the objectives
- The intended education qualification corresponds very well to the purpose and objectives for this programme
- We would welcome a clear policy on how to encourage students to participate

2.2	**Structure and Content of the Program of Study**	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.1	The course curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance.				X	
2.2.2	The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per course and per semester for the student either he / she studies in a specific program or he/she is registered and studies simultaneously in additional programs of studies according to the European practice in higher education institutions.					X
2.2.3	The program of study is structured in a consistent manner and in sequence, so that concepts operating as preconditions precede the teaching of other, more complex and cognitively more demanding, concepts.				X	
2.2.4	The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent.				X	
2.2.5	The program, in addition to the courses focusing on the specific				X	

	discipline, includes an adequate number of general education courses.						
2.2.6	The content of courses and modules, and the corresponding educational activities are suitable for achieving the desired learning outcomes with regards to the knowledge, skills, and abilities which should be acquired by students.			X			
2.2.7	The number and the content of the program's courses are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes.			X			
2.2.8	The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology.			X			
2.2.9	Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided.			X			

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Overall the structure and the content of the programme of study are very good indeed. Still we have a list of recommendations. The programme of study fits very well with what is expected in Europe and internationally for this level of study.

Recommendations

- Making clear the content of the pre-sessional course for potential applicants
- No information in the programme specification about the pre-sessional shipping seminars
- Introduce an introduction to legal method, legal institutions/systems and legal skills course as a preparatory course.
- Continued provision of academic skills and competencies (eg. Writing skills, referencing skills etc.) programme.
- Information about what students can expect from dissertation supervisions.
- Amend the different word limits for the Dissertation in the conventional course (15,000) as against the distance learning programme (20,000)

Note the expected number of students who will be studying simultaneously at another academic institution, based on your experience so far, regarding students who study simultaneously in the programs of your institution.

N/A

2.3	**Quality Assurance of the Program of Study**	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.1	The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define				X	

			1	2	3	4	5
	clear competencies and procedures.						
2.3.2	Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for						X
	2.3.2.1	the members of the academic personnel					X
	2.3.2.2	the members of the administrative personnel					X
	2.3.2.3	the students.				X	
2.3.3	The guide and / or the regulations for quality assurance, provide detailed information and data for the support and management of the program of study.					X	
2.3.4	The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors.					X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Overall very high standards. Two recommendations:
- it would be useful to have student reps in the internal quality assurance committee also for initial programme approval
- it would be useful to have student reps in the distance learning unit of the university/

2.4	**Management of the Program of Study**		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.4.1	Effective management of the program of study with regard to its design, its approval, its monitoring and its review, is in place.					X	
2.4.2	It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe.						X
2.4.3	It is ensured that the program's management and development process is an academic process which operates without any non-academic interventions.					X	
2.4.4	The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study.						X
2.4.5	Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include:						X
	2.4.5.1	The provisions regarding unit credits					X
	2.4.5.2	The expected learning outcomes					X

	2.4.5.3	The methodology					X
	2.4.5.4	Course descriptions				X	
	2.4.5.5	The program's structure				X	
	2.4.5.6	The admission requirements			X		
	2.4.5.7	The format and the procedures for student assessment				X	
2.4.6		The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.			X		
2.4.7		The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism, by the students, is ensured.					X
2.4.8		The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Overall we are impressed but there are a few areas where we can make recommendations:
- Admissions criteria could be a bit clearer
- English proficiency criteria not very clear (for example IELTS 6.5 no stated; whether an interview will be required)
- No information in the programme specification about the pre-sessional shipping seminars
- Introduce an introduction to legal method, legal institutions/systems and legal skills course as a preparatory course.
- Continued provision of academic skills and competencies (eg. Writing skills, referencing skills etc.) programme.
- Information about what students can expect from dissertation supervisions.
- Amend the different word limits for the Dissertation

In the case of practical training, note:
- The number of credit units for courses and the number of credits for practical training
- In which semester does practical training takes place?
- Note if practical training is taking place in a country other than the homecountry of the institution which awards the higher education qualification

N/A

(B

2.5	International Dimension of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.5.1	The program's collaborations with other institutions are compared positively with corresponding collaborations of other departments / programs of study in Europe and internationally.			X		
2.5.2	The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing.				X	
2.5.3	Students participate in exchange programs.			X		
2.5.4	The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally.			X		

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

While there is an existing thriving student exchange programme, we feel that for a shorter programme student exchanges may not be ideal, in the sense that students may have to consider extending the studies by one semester if studying abroad. Overall the DL programme is not suitable for student exchanges.

Good international links

Also, comment on the degree the program compares positively with corresponding programs operating in Cyprus and abroad in higher education institutions of the same rank.

There seem to be no comparative programmes in Cyprus or indeed abroad as this is quite an innovative programme. And it is certainly well designed as a masters level programme.

2.6	Connection with the labor market and the society	1	2	3	4	5
2.6.1	The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective.					X
2.6.2	According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory.					X
2.6.3	Benefits, for the society, deriving from the program are significant.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

There seems to be excellent links with the labour market, but public and private sector and the programme seems to be responsive to desires of the Department of Merchant Shipping and

the Central Bank of Cyprus to enhance the so-called blue economy.

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING							
3.1	**Research - Teaching Synergies**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
3.1.1	It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research.			X			
3.1.2	New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study.			X			
3.1.3	Adequate and sufficient facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students.			X			
3.1.4	The results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, conference minutes, publications etc.			X			
3.1.5	External, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.				X		
3.1.6	Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.			X			
3.1.7	The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory.			X			
3.1.8	The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory.			X			
3.1.9	Student training in the research process is sufficient.			X			

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

It would be useful to have further student training in the research process and more engagement of students in research projects. It would also be useful to have mandatory sabbatical research leave to enhance the research profile of staff.

ΔΙ.Π.Α.Ε.
DI.P.A.E.

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

4.1	Administrative Mechanisms	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.1	There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties.					X
4.1.2	Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.					X
4.1.3	The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

We were impressed by the studies and student welfare team we have met and all policies they have implemented.

4.2	Infrastructure / Support	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.1	There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program.			X		
4.2.2	There is a supportive internal communication platform.				X	
4.2.3	The facilities are adequate in number and size.				X	
4.2.4	The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate.				X	
4.2.5	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students.			X		
4.2.6	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications.			X		
4.2.7	The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

We feel that the library resources, both traditional and online is an area where improvement can be made. Some more books (for research purposes) and also subscriptions to Westlaw and/or LexisNexis as well as acquisition of ebooks.

4.3	Financial Resources	1	2	3	4	5
4.3.1	The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, allow for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel.				X	
4.3.2	The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments.			X		
4.3.3	The remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus.			X		
4.3.4	Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions.				X	

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

It is clear that the university and the departments involved in the programme are willing to invest and provide the requisite resources.

We have not had any discussions or information re staff remuneration.

The following criterion applies additionally for distance learning programs of study.

5.	DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS	1	2	3	4	5
5.1	Feedback processes for teaching personnel with regards to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.				X	
5.2	The process and the conditions for the recruitment of academic / teaching personnel, ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and experience for long distance education.			X		
5.3	Through established procedures, appropriate training, guidance and support, are provided to teaching personnel, to enable it to efficiently support the educational process.			X		
5.4	Student performance monitoring mechanisms are satisfactory.			X		
5.5	Adequate mentoring by the teaching personnel, is provided to students, through established procedures.			X		
5.6	The unimpeded long distance communication between the teaching personnel and the students, is ensured to a satisfactory degree.				X	
5.7	Assessment consistency, its equivalent application to all students, and the compliance with predefined procedures, are ensured.			X		
5.8	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) comply with the requirements provided by the long distance education methodology and are updated regularly.			X		
5.9	The program of study has the appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the support of learning.			X		
5.10	The supporting infrastructures are easily accessible.				X	
5.11	Students are informed and trained with regards to the available educational infrastructure.			X		
5.12	The procedures for systematic control and improvement of the supportive services are regular and effective.			X		
5.13	Infrastructure for distance education is comparable to university infrastructure in the European Union and internationally.			X		

		1	2	3	4	5
5.14	Electronic library services are provided according to international practice in order to support the needs of the students and of the teaching personnel.				X	
5.15	The students and the teaching personnel have access to the necessary electronic sources of information, relevant to the program, the level, and the method of teaching.					X
5.16	The percentage of teaching personnel who holds a doctorate, in a program of study which is offered long distance, is not less than 75%.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

While the design is overall good we feel that it is useful to have refreshers training courses throughout the duration of the programme.

Also we would encourage the university to invest in the acquisition of more online resources and ebooks.

If the following apply, note "√"in the appropriate space next to each statement. In case the following statements do not apply, note what is applicable:

The maximum number of students per class-section, should not exceed 30 students.	√
The conduct of written examinations with the physical presence of the students, under the supervision of the institution or under the supervision of reliable agencies which operate in the countries of the students, is compulsory.	√
The number of long distance classes taught by the academic personnel does not exceed the number of courses taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study.	√

The following criterion applies additionally for doctoral programs of study.

6.	DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY	1	2	3	4	5
6.1	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through Doctoral Studies Regulations.					

6.2	The structure and the content of a doctoral program of study are satisfactory and they ensure the quality provision of doctoral studies.					
6.3	The number of academic personnel, which is going to support the doctoral program of study, is adequate.					
6.4	The doctoral studies' supervisors have the necessary academic qualifications and experience for the supervision of the specific dissertations.					
6.5	The degree of accessibility of all interested parties to the Doctoral Studies Regulations is satisfactory.					
6.6	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the academic personnel, is apt for the continuous and effective feedback provided to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.					
6.7	The research interests of academic advisors and supervisors are satisfactory and they adequately cover the thematic areas of research conducted by the doctoral students of the program.					

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

Note the number of doctoral students under the supervision of each member of the academic personnel of the program and the academic rank of the supervisor.

FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

Please note your final remarks and suggestions for the program of study and/or regarding particular aspects of the program.

We are of the opinion that the programme of study is well designed and has all the hallmarks to be successful. There are some areas of excellence (good practice) and some areas of improvement where recommendations are made below.

We note, in particular, that the programme is innovative in its inter-disciplinary approach combining maritime law and shipping business. As such it is a programme worthy of approval and support. It is well designed and the relevant academic staff are in a position to deliver it well.

Some further investment will be required by the institution as the programme gets under way and expands.

Effectiveness of teaching

Good practice

- Cross disciplinary approach
- Subscription to turnitin
- A sound student ombudsman system

Recommendations

- Making clear the content of the pre-sessional course for potential applicants
- English proficiency criteria not very clear (for example IELTS 6.5 no stated; whether an interview will be required)
- No information in the programme specification about the pre-sessional shipping seminars
- Introduce an introduction to legal method, legal institutions/systems and legal skills course as a preparatory course.
- Continued provision of academic skills and competencies (eg. Writing skills, referencing skills etc.) programme.
- Information about what students can expect from dissertation supervisions.
- Amend the different word limits for the Dissertation in the conventional course (15,000) as against the distance learning programme (20,000)
- Considering changing the title of various subjects to better describe their content for students who may have no background in the area.

Programme of study and HE qualifications

Good practice

- A good range of assessment methods
- Admissions criteria which encourage wide participation
- Good application of the ECTS
- Flexible options for the busy professional

Recommendations

- Supervision training for visiting lecturers (given that some VLs are not active academic researchers but eminent professionals) for both the programmes.
- No sample teaching materials (for both DL and conventional programmes) available for scrutiny
- No actual mock up of the web learning platform for scrutiny
- Student exchange (especially Erasmus) programme not convenient given the programme structure; students on both DL and Conventional course need to be properly informed.
- Should demonstrate how the online delivery actually supports the achievement of the learning outcomes expressed in the individual modules. The course team refers to the immersed learning model for the DL course – clearer articulation on how interactivity is achieved is needed (not enough, perhaps, only to use the online discussion board).

Research and synergies with teaching

Recommendations

- To consider using some of the research projects as a platform for learning and teaching (for instance, the project could be used as a case study for formative assessment or self-reflection)
- The Research Methods module does not refer to legal research methodologies or indeed a bibliography with some of the more important legal research materials.
- Although the course team stressed that the research methods module will focus on law and shipping business, the module description is not quite explicit about that emphasis.
- To reconsider whether an examination is an appropriate means of assessing Research Methods.

Administration services, student welfare and support

Good practice

- Student support website is excellent
- The Department's e-learning databases referred to.

Recommendations

- Should consider referring students to bailii.org for free legal materials
- A long term enhancement would be a paid subscription to lexis or westlaw.

- Revising the module specifications to consider specifically introducing relevant e-books.
- Devise a careers support scheme which is relevant specifically to postgraduate students

Distance learning

Good Practice

- Good opportunity for student feedback.
- Good mentoring and control of discussions by teaching staff.

Recommendations

- Technical specifications of IT equipment should be made clear to students (including for example processing speed and data storage).
- There is no sample of the VLE (virtual learning environment) training module for students and staff. A useful model should include an FAQ troubleshooting sheet, contact details of the IT support team, a "how to" video, and a forum board for students to post problems/concerns.
- Clearer information in the module specifications as to how often discussions on the platform should take place.
- Consider assessing participation in the forums to encourage engagement from students.
- Articulate a target IT support staff- student ratio.

Names and Signatures of the Chair and the Members of the External Evaluation Committee:

Name:
Loukas Mistelis
Jason Chuah
Antonios Lionarakis
Evangelos Sambrakos
Charalambos Constantinou
Sotiris Christophi

Date: 13/9/2016

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